

THE BLUE GRASS BLADE

Published at Lexington, Kentucky, Every Sunday
Founded 1884, and edited by Charles Chilton Moore up to
his death, February 7, 1906.

JAMES E. HUGHES Editor and Publisher

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By mail, postpaid, \$1.50 per year, in advance.
Trial subscription 15 cents per month.
All foreign subscription, postpaid, \$2.00 per year.
Five new subscribers sent with one remittance at \$1.00 per
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THE OFFICE of publication of the Blade is at 55 West Short Street, Lexington, Kentucky, to which all Free-thinkers will be given a hearty welcome.

THE BLADE is entered at the Postoffice, at Lexington, Kentucky, as second class mailing matter.

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS to THE BLUE GRASS BLADE, P. O. Box 393, Lexington, Ky.

It is your move!

Some new subscribers would help.

The church has ever detracted from progress.

According to theology it must be either bliss or blisters.

Religion is full of thunderboxes, lightnings and bogus terrors.

For the Blade's success on its new venture we must depend on you.

Time was when the ministry was venerated, now it is a by-word and a reproach.

In the Secular world a protestant fraud is as bad as a Catholic humbug. Where's the difference?

So live that you can look any durned man in the face and tell him to go clean, plumb, to—er—Hell-erna.

Having got a glimpse of Roosevelt's big stick, of course Cuba is going to be good. She's got to, that's all.

Theology believes in punishment on the installment plan but to cut off a dog's tail an inch at a time makes it no easier on the dog.

Most men assert they are free, yet they willingly become the most abject and pitiful slaves to the party lash and readily swallow the bolus.

God is eternal, declares the religionist, but after all he must share eternity with the slightest speck of dust swimming in a sunbeam. It, too, is eternal.

As an evidence that religion, especially the Christian brand, and business won't mix, we have yet to find a church deacon who could get a loan from a bank upon the unctuousness of his Amen.

The purists are making progress but slowly, for while they labor hard and long for the conservation of virtue they have neglected seeking for the causation of vice. Once found, the remedy is not far off.

If the laborer is ever to find political redemption in this land, or any other, he must cease allowing himself to be swayed through the heart instead of the head. He must use reason more and sentiment less.

The chief priests and Levites still worship at the shrine of Mammon and they give encouragement to the professional bank wreckers, protective tariff beneficiaries and the sworn enemies of labor. Of such is the kingdom of heaven.

We note the comment made by Higher Science in regard to our opinion concerning the Humanitarian Review upon the question of organization. To be candid The Blade did not believe the case was half as bad as it is made to appear.

Among the pulpiteers there are thousands possessed of such seldom brains that all they have to boast of could be successfully blown through a straw into the eye of a mosquito without even making the pestiferous little insect wink.

In spite of the fact that labor is cribbed, cabined and confined by the most unnatural conditions, it creates wealth every year to properly feed, clothe, educate and comfortably house very human beings who stands beneath the shadow of our flag.

It is gratifying to note that while the American government has refused to admit the Chinese laborer, they have very properly placed his joss sticks

on a par with articles of religious worship pertaining to other systems. The Board of United States general appraisers at the Port of New York has ruled that joss sticks, being imported to this country from China, do not come under the head of "manufactured articles" and, therefore subject to a duty of that class, but were designated as "incense" and therefore were "unenumerated." Thus the joss worshippers may play with his sticks without a heavy burden of taxation. And why should the Chinaman be taxed for his joss sticks when every church in the country is able to dodge the collector?

HUMAN CONCEPTIONS OF SIN

AND VICARIOUS ATONEMENT.

The Christian conception of sin, now engrained upon our system of jurisprudence, is responsible for much misplaced energy and talent, and the proficient cause of a mistaken idea concerning its origin and treatment. This proposition was given a forcible demonstration in Lexington, Sunday last, when according to the news reports, Dean Capers of the Protestant Episcopal church is quoted as having said:

"Man's consciousness of sin is measured by the altitude he has built, and this consciousness of sin demonstrates the necessity of the plan of redemption."

In the first place it is necessary that we should determine what is meant by the term, sin, and to what extent the human mind is influenced thereby. The Christian explanation is totally inadequate to admit of a rational attempt at elucidation for it brings sin into the world at one fell swoop whereas perfection and a total freedom from sin had previously existed. Christian theology teaches that originally, sin came into the world through Adam. That Adam was created perfect, in the image, or likeness of God. That Adam's sin consisted of simile disobedience in doing that which he had been forbidden to do by some superior power. That by reason of this disobedient act, sinfulness was transmitted to all underneath posterity, a curse placed upon the world, from which, an act of murder became a necessity in order to provide a method of redemption from that sin. At the same time, we are assured, that the same disobedient act also brought death into the world, a state which was, supposedly, previously unknown.

If we take up the thread of the argument at this point we are compelled to draw the conclusion that an act, to be a sin, must be original, that is, it must find its motive and volition in the individual committing that act. Philosophy has clearly demonstrated that motives are in every case, the causes of volition and the will must always be the strongest motive. God, having created sin, must necessarily be sinful, or, being powerless to prevent sin, must surrender one of the principal attributes with which his votaries have clothed him. To condemn posterity for the sinful act of an ancient progenitor is clearly unjust and the Christian is bewildered, no-matter from which point he approaches the question.

Discarding theology in such an inquiry and approaching it from a purely scientific basis, we find that sin, or crime, when reduced to its finest analysis, is that act upon the part of any organism towards another organism, which is injurious to that other from that other's point of view. In its broadest sense this definition is too vague to be of much value, for it opens up a wide and almost limitless field. On the other hand did we narrow the definition down so as to be more explicit, it must necessarily exclude some of the more lowly forms. From this understanding of sin has come that doctrine of self-preservation which we are told was the first law of nature, and this, clearly, does not belong to man alone, but is the common property of all animals. It is also clear that primitive man could not make the distinction that we do between sin, crime and wrongdoing, or an act of war. These, combined, made up for him, the only kind of sin he knew of, and for each and all he avenged himself as best he could, according to the limits of his individual impulses.

With this understanding of sin, it seems impossible that any reasonably intelligent person could arrive at a state, or condition, of consciousness where in any plan or system, of redemption could arise that would be sufficient and exist outside of the individual. Vicarious atonement is foreign to law, natural or statutory. Forces that exist outside of, and beyond the individual cannot atone for individual sin. It is a fundamental law of nature that man feels the consequences of his own acts that such consequences are inevitable and he has to meet them himself. It may be a part of God's plan to punish the innocent for the guilty, but it is not in harmony with the best feelings of humanity and in this humanity revolts against the vicarious atonement and the Christian plan of redemption. Transcend a law of nature and nature inflicts her own punishment upon the transgressor, not upon another for him and permit him to escape. Violate any part of the statutory law and the judicial tribunals impose penalties upon the violator, not upon innocent persons. The Christian notion of regarding sin as wholly repugnant to every human feeling, a travesty on justice and a deliberate trampling upon the equitable application of human rights.

Did a person owe any financial obligation and another person volunteered to liquidate that obligation, the offered help being satisfactory to all persons interested, the obligation is discharged thereby and the debtor relieved. Did man commit crime and a thousand Christs should perish on the cross, the entire aggregation could not relieve him from the weightiness of his act, though they died for his sake. The punishment would, or might be, put upon another, but the moral responsibility would still attach to the person committing the crime.

It is in this that the Christian system is repugnant to reason, in violation of every known principle of human justice, and, as such it must be adjudged to be unsound, untrue and unworthy.

OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN

Every Christian worshipper is called upon during his religious oblations, whether in the public church or in the privacy of the home, to repeat what is commonly designated as the Lord's Prayer, said to have been given by Jesus to the faithful of his flock. For centuries this prayer has been repeated by rote, not one in a thousand ever pausing long enough to consider the utter folly of it all, and the meaningless phrases condensed into so much arrant nonsense. It may be, after all, that "fools says in his heart, there is no god," but usually, those who profess to know it all, goes and blabbs it right out. Men's acts deal altogether with the visible, but their foolish prayers relate only to the intangible. The first thing is to know what men do, the next and more important, is to know why they do it. We may mount the hill of Mirza and from it view the tide of Time rushing over into the illimitable sea, we may be able to comprehend something of the meaning of the mighty farce tragedy that is being enacted on the bridge of Life, but we can never know why seemingly intelligent men will continue to waste their time and energies in foolish prayer.

Doubtless you have read the story of the Deserted Village. If you have you will doubtless remember that the talented author describes as being the most learned and intellectual men in that village, the parson and the doctor, heavily loaded into my discussion about theology and at last the parson accuses the doctor of required irreverence towards God, by refusing to look "upward" toward the light. The doctor is made to retort that is the parson is constantly rolling his eyes upward, he had developed the midriffine membrane, called the third eyelid, so common in apes, which tended to shut out "not all the light," but "all the light the parson did not want." It is a fundamental axiom that too much light is hurtful to weak eyes, and in the same relation too much work is hurtful to weakened minds and intellects and it is such who prefer to spend their time in prayer, hoping to gain something for nothing, to acquire valuable rights without exertion. Thus it is that the Christian world hope to reach the gates of the New Jerusalem and enter in, by merely reciting the Lord's prayer, instead of deserving to go there by good actions.

The opening of the prayer is an address, a direction, indicating that it is intended for a certain being, namely, "Our Father who art in heaven." None ever stop long enough to consider, or even give the matter any thought, whether or not the petition is ever delivered to the being to whom it is addressed. The destination is somewhat vague. It is said that some time ago a religious critic in Germany sent a postal card through the mails simply addressed to "God in Heaven," and the card was returned to the writer officially stamped "insufficiently addressed." It was only too true. The combined wisdom of all the governments of earth has not been able to determine the location of Heaven and none know what it would be like, when they do find it. But why designate that being as "Our Father?" What has done for mankind that would warrant such a title? Does he give or bestow upon one child of the race its "daily bread" without healthful labor? There may be something in the argument that God helps those who help themselves, but it is noted that the self-help must come first and when the object of the labor has been accomplished through self help, why thank God for it? If man did not help himself, would God take care of him? Has God taken care of him? True, indeed, the "Lord" may protest, "but man has to point out the way to solve the problem of provision and production. We frequently hear somebody say, "God help him," and when the necessity arises for such a remark, it is a case of "Good-bye." Man does not need a "Father" in "Heaven." Fathers are needed on earth. They are wanted here. Not to the past, but to the future, man must look for the Saturnian age when the demons of need and greed will be exercised and human love become the universal law. Man must look to the fathers of earth and cease dreaming about imaginary fathers in heaven. The former are capable of useful labor for the production of human happiness, but the latter are dependents upon man for their show of vain glory.

Not so very long ago a religiously inclined lady wrote the Blade, saying that Freethinkers were dreamers and accused its editor of dreaming too much. It may be true, and probably is, but we love to dream. Life is a dream. It is mystic, wonderful, and we know not when we sleep nor when, where, or how we shall wake. We love to dream that this world will cease its vapors of things celestial and turn its attention to things terrestrial. One entirely waited for us to be born and another waits to see what we will do now we are here. Gazing upon the iridescent glory that seems to belt the world with beauty, the hope comes that in the years to be the theological storm clouds that o'er shadow the mind of men will recede and dissipate themselves. The Blade may not live to attain it neither may its present readers, but he who strives for it, though vanquished, is still a victor.

In the struggle Freethought may be wounded grievously, yet, by heroic endeavor and united effort, her banner, torn, but flying, shall be able to wave over and above the grave of religious tyranny. Did a person owe any financial obligation and another person volunteered to liquidate that obligation, the offered help being satisfactory to all persons interested, the obligation is discharged thereby and the debtor relieved. Did man commit crime and a thousand Christs should perish on the cross, the entire aggregation could not relieve him from the weightiness of his act, though they died for his sake. The punishment would, or might be, put upon another, but the moral responsibility would still attach to the person committing the crime.

THE BRIDEGROOM CAME, BUT —

The name of Miss Katherine Lang, of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, deserves to be immortalized in poetry and prose. We have read the arguments of the marriage reformers, we have waded through the whiteness and whiteness of the advocates of free love and its kindred subjects, but Miss Lang has delivered an argument that cannot be answered, and if the great world of Femininity would but follow the example, she has set, the divorce lawyer would have to take in his shingle and go out of business, the divorce mills would cease to grind for lack of grist, and the shameful Benedictines of the day would simply have to take to the woods. Could

her example be followed the domestic peace of the world would be increased.

Numerous exemplars have been pointed to for the guidance of the race and many of the alleged saints whose names are enshrined in the various religions of the world, are made shining stars in humanity's heaven, but they all pale in the presence of Miss Lang. Her act was simple, yet strong; easy, yet of great force and power; commonplace, yet it shines with a lustre the ages cannot dim. She is great in a glory all her own. From the loins of such a woman come the noblest and best of the race. If it be true that Romans nursed by a she-wolf actually became demi-gods, what might not Americans be when sprung from the loins of such a lioness!

According to the published accounts Miss Lang was engaged to be married. It was no mere dream of sensuality, of which the heaven of free love is but, a truly practical affair. She was willing to comply with all the requirements of the law. She was wedded and won. Before giving utterance to that one word, which has made many a man lose his identity and demand an introduction upon meeting himself in the middle of the turnpike road, she wanted to know that she was going to be the wife of a real man, one worthy of the name. She made a condition that her intended husband should meet her at the altar with the sum of \$500 in the pockets of his carefully creased pantaloons. On the appointed day Miss Lang went to the church to meet with her bridegroom and the \$500. The intended bridegroom put in his appearance but he failed to produce the cash. Miss Lang thereupon flatly told him in the presence of the assembled guests that she would not marry him and he would have nothing more to do with him. Now let us quote:

"When he asked me to marry him," she explained, "I told him that he must first show me that he was able to support a wife by going to work, and that he must further show that he was frugal by saving \$500, which he must produce at the altar. Recently he announced to me that he had saved that much and I agreed that the day of the wedding should be set. Through mutual friends, I learned that he had been working but little in the past year and that he was deceiving me about the amount of money he had saved. I did not want the money, I simply wanted him to show me that he was a man."

Right here the Blade wishes to extend its congratulations to Miss Lang and to the man who is finally able to prove that he is worthy of her. She was not mercenary. It was her right to know for sure, that she was the wife of a genuine man when the final words were spoken. She recognized the fact that a real man neither idles away his time or lies about the condition of his bank account. If all American women were so exacting the divorce courts would stand idle, their dockets empty, and this would be a saving of money, shame and disgrace. Woman should, at all times be just as determined that she is not linking her domestic fortunes with a male person who is unable to provide for her and her children. Here is marriage reform with a vengeance and the free love advocates are deprived of a very powerful weapon in their argument.

One of the principal troubles with the average young woman is that once she "falls in love" she imagines that the whole world looks upon the object of her affections with the eyes she is using and meditating upon how good and how nice he is. Such a thing as failure upon his part seems impossible to her. A few weeks later when it begins to dawn upon her mind that he hasn't sufficient ability to replenish the larder, it is too late. If she is meek she accepts her fate uncomplainingly, but if she is possessed of spirit, and above all the courage, she consults a lawyer.

Were there more women like Miss Lang the linchpin in the logic of those who rail at the institution of marriage would slip out and get lost.

MUSIC AN INDEX TO CIVILIZATION

Show us the music of a people, or a race, and we will point out to you their particular standard of civilization. The more crude the music, the more barbaric the people. It is a long step from the tom-tom and the tinkling plates of the savage to a modern orchestra, yet the former are at the bottom of the scale and the latter at the top, while between them are the various gradations of instrumentation from which people derive the music that is most pleasing to them, the only music they know of.

What man can find language that is sufficiently expressive to describe the effect that music has upon the human mind? He who cannot fully appreciate good music is out of harmony with the spheres. Music is a kind of unfathomable speech, which enriches, enlivens and uplifts. If there is such a thing as ever getting toward the edge of infinitude, music will help to take us there. Was it not the immortal Bard of Avon who said:

"The man that has no music in himself,
Nor is moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils."

and he spoke with a truth. It is a recreation to mind and body. It may come in martial airs, or sweet, soothing melody, but it touches all, inspires all, and the human heart makes a ready reply.

If the premises here laid down are true we can at once perceive that the orthodox heaven is built upon a plan of simple and barbaric splendor. The playing upon harps and the tooting of horns, combined with a big, eternal chorus of hallelujahs, is the only music mentioned as existing in heaven. Add to this a pair of No. ten wings and a crown, another evidence of barbaric thought, and you have the makeup complete. No wonder there is neither marriage or giving in marriage in heaven. Through it all the orthodox church appropriates the science of music, claims its development as her own and declares in triumph that it is all from god and of

god. Vain fools. Well, indeed did George Elliott say, "God could not make Antonio Stradivari's violins without Antonio." If music was from god and of god he would have given imperfect man perfect music and not leave man to develop it for himself. Only as man has drawn himself away from god has the quality and beauty of his music more fully, more richly developed.

The claim was recently made that if every line of music composed for Christ and his church were removed, there would be nothing in the art left worth retaining. And this in the face of the numerous contentions, the quarrels and bickerings in so many orthodox churches about the playing upon an organ or the singing of a trained choir in some of the sectarian churches. Why it is not so very long ago that one of the strongest pillars in a Lexington church of prominence withdrew his active support because the more progressive members of the congregation purchased and installed an organ to aid in their Sunday worship. Technically that "church pillar" was right. There is too much real beauty in music to waste it in the propaganda of orthodox creeds, and when it is known that men and women attend church more for the sake of the music, than because of the sermons and prayers, the church managers pander to the public passion and strives to build up on the music.

All mankind loves good music. Here is a key-note for Rationalistic work. Why not organize good societies, provide first class music, good singing, and a first class speaker, for the battle would then be won? No fear need be entertained for its perpetuation if such meritorious elements were introduced. Within a comparatively short space of time larger meeting places would have to be secured and civilizing influences would take the place of church doctrine.

ETHICS OF RATIONALISM SUPERIOR TO CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

The principal doctrine of the Christian cult is self-abnegation.

The Chief aim of Rationalism is to inculcate the principle of self control.

Between these elements there is a wide and impassable gulf. Upon the former the entire Christian system of morality has been built, and upon the other lies the foundation of all there is to human morality as implied in Freethought.

There is little to be gained by assailing the former in that its failing has been clearly demonstrated by its incapacity for good, hence it is with the latter that we now wish to deal in an effort to point out a method of attaining that condition of the mind wherein self-control becomes the leading virtue.

It is written that Zopyrus, the physiognomist, said, concerning the well known philosopher:

"The features of Socrates showed that he was stupid, brutal, sensual and addicted to drunkenness."

History records that when this statement was brought to Socrates, he at once replied:

"By nature I am addicted to all these sins, and they were only restrained and vanquished by the continual practice of virtue."

This is the secret of moral success in a nutshell. It is all summed up in that eloquent and forceful reply of Socrates. In other words, it means that the particular virtue one would like to have, must be first assumed as already his, then appropriated, then to become a part of live in the character of the individual. No matter how great are your weakness, or how much you may regret them, assume steadily and persistently their opposite until you acquire the habit of holding the loftier thought, then to live it, not in its weakness but in its wholesomeness and strength. It is necessary, however, that the ideal sought, be an efficient faculty or quality, not merely or deficient. The only way to reach or to attain to any lofty purpose is to bend one's self towards it with all one's might and we approximate it just in proportion to the intensity and the persistency of our effort to attain it.

It might be said that all this sounds well and reads well on paper, but it is impossible, impracticable. But is it? Suppose one tries it! Some day, sometime, if you are excitable and nervous and inclined to fly off at a tangent over some little annoyances or trifling difficulty, do not waste your time regretting this weakness and telling those you meet that you cannot help it. Just assume the calm, deliberate, quiet composure which should characterize your ideal, then persuade yourself that you are the opposite to that which you had believed yourself. You will be amazed to see the wondrous change its effects will produce. This is the very essence of the principle of self control and at the same time it clearly establishes the fact that the salvation and improvement of man lies within himself. Accomplish this and the church is fully answered in all things. Attain it and Freethought has successfully engrafted itself upon the great plant of human life.

ABOUT THE MOORE BOOK.

So far the proposition suggested to publish in book form a collection of the best theological writings of our late Editor C. C. Moore, has met with a favorable response. The number of approving letters we have received up to this time are far from sufficient to justify us assuming the burden of such an expense and we again ask our readers to give us an expression of their opinion.

The communication, published in last week's Blade, from Dr. J. B. Wilson, concerning this subject, ought to have weight with many. Doctor Wilson knows better than most men, the nature and character of those writings which were published during Mr. Moore's palmy days, when he was in full possession and enjoyment of a vigorous intellect. To be candid, we agree with Dr. Wilson, in that neither Dog Fennel in the Orient or Behind

the Bars really do Mr. Moore justice in regard to his views on matters religious. His earlier writings most of which have been preserved in a scrap book are more able to perpetuate his memory in the world of Freethought and link his name with the glorious immortals of the past.

Reader, do not hesitate to say what you think about it. The Blade is your forum. We do not ask for any money until the book is completed and ready for mailing. It is published due notice will be given to all subscribers. The book will cost each subscriber and we propose to print the name of each subscriber on the cover in gold letters. We want one thousand subscriptions, but as soon as five hundred names have been received, we will begin to publish the book.

* * * *

The man who makes the slightest attempt to unravel the arguments of modern preachers avert the unknown, needs a ball of twine, a piece of chalk and an extinguishable torch, if he hopes to ever be able to find his way out of the mystic maze, back to the sunshine of common sense.

* * * *

Solomon admitted that there were three things altogether too wonderful for him to understand, and it must not be forgotten that David's second son had been gathered to his fathers for long years before the present political combinations in America were born.

* * * *

Don't lay all the blame on the Catholic church! Why, if the protestant clergy could have their way they would transform this nation into an intolerant theocracy, instantaneo, and proceed to disenfranchise every Jew and Catholic, every Atheist and Agnostic and do it all for the great glory of God.

* * * *

Our jury trials are rapidly becoming a screaming farce. In the old days a trial by jury was the sheet anchor of liberty, to-day it is the rock in the tempestuous sea of anarchy. In the old days it was the bright bow of promise, to-day it is the desolate desert of an abject slavery. Sacred relics have even been a valuable aid to religion, but having crossed the bridge it were the part of wisdom to burn it that we may not return. As the old order changes, yielding place to new, we must need reform our entire jury system or abolish it.

* * * *

Every ecclesiastical attempt to suppress liberty of thought has, with all the centuries, proven disastrous failures until today the Index Expurgatorius of the Roman church completely stifles itself, by spreading in the widest commonly the few works whose good fortune it has been to fall under its ban. Ever since the Edenic episode, and before it, mankind in general has manifested a keen appetite for forbidden fruit.

* * * *

When the great body of the American people can be made to understand that every penny collected, by whatever method, by any department of government, comes from out the sear purse of Labor, which is the only source of wealth, we may then confidently hope to hear of political issues that will stand for something, mean something.

* * * *

Reader, did you ever stop to think what could be accomplished, could the Blade be enabled to penetrate every American home? Could we slay the serpent of religious fanaticism, could we lay bare the frauds of the clergy, could we dissipate the mirage in which so many of them believe, the era of reform and righteousness, would be at hand. The Blade cannot do this today because it lacks the requisite number of readers. More readers is the pressing necessity. Can't you and I just once? Suppose you make a real effort! Say to yourself, "I can get a new subscriber inside of the next thirty days," and then immediately afterwards say, "I will get that new subscriber inside of thirty days. In this world it is the "I can and I will," that counts.

* * * *

No, the fool-killer is not dead, he has simply vanquished. He took one look at the fin de siècle crop of fledgling preachers, they are turning out from Kentucky, the bunch of Sweet Williams who play the part of church deacons, and then immediately hit the dusty for parts unknown. Some day he will return, and then somebody had better "look er lede out!" for he can play a fearful havoc when he has to. Pity, isn't it, that men should really demand such a functionary?

* * * *

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Actions Louder than Words

Fairmont Springs, B. C.—I think you have struck the right note this time in raising the price of your paper. Why should we expect you to work for us at a loss, we who say that we believe in doing what is fair and honest. The first thing we should want to do is to give what is fair and just reward for what we get. Well Brother Hughes, I am getting old and cannot see very well, but you can count on me.

Dr. Wilson's Book. It is a conversational grand book. I can tell you so long as I can dig up. Indeed please find five dollars, you may give my credit for same and keep the old Blade going—SAMUEL BREWER.

Can be Straightened Out.

Lorena, Texas.—While on my way to Waco, yesterday, I met Mr. J. K. Kendrick, a subscriber I secured for a few years back. He gave me \$2.00 and asked me to renew for him as he said

OUR LETTER BOX

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS.

Correspondents when writing to the Blade for the purpose of having their communications published are requested to observe the following rules:

1. Write only on one side of the paper.

2. Condense what you have to say so as to make not more than 300 words.

3. Always sign your name as anonymous communications will not be published. The author must know whom it is destined. If you wish to use a name other than your own for business reasons, give your own name privately to the editor. It will be carefully guarded.

4. If your letter is not published, don't write and complain about it. There are hundreds of others. The publication of letters will be given in the order of being received and in accordance with their literary or business value.

TALKS TO CORRESPONDENTS

W. G. MacNeill—Your good wishes are appreciated. The subhead over your letter will suggest a new motto.

H. Austin—We cannot tell how far the rain in subscription has interfered with our circulation until some subscribers fail to renew. We expect to lose but few.

Andrew Cook—The Blade only took letters for the book. We will let you know in a few days where you can get one.

Jerry Harker—Some of the clipping you send will be useful. Thanks.

David Smith—It is always distressing to read letters like yours, but it is a journey we have all got to take. We do not wish to stop the Blade coming to you so long as you are able to read it and we trust that you will experience such an improvement as to induce you to change your mind.

D. F. Martin—We thank you for your interest in The Blade. It is true that we have had to change our rates but upon the next renewal the matter can be easily arranged.

Samuel Brower—Your kindly actions are fully appreciated. Did the Blade have more such friends it would soon become a power in the land. Many thanks.

E. H. Burnham—Expressions of appreciation coming from you are a cause of gratification. We will use the clipping with editorial comment.

John McFarland—Various reports have been sent concerning the Judge Roche incident. From what you say, however, I think we are still to come. Mr. Wilson read with eagerness whatever I see from you, but you kick a little at eternal rest, I can not care very much in it; can you imagine any little bifurcation in unconscious rest?

Frank Holmes—Thanks for clipping. L. M. Lawrence—Your condition is certainly unenviable. Still, you're not the first family that has been ruined by religion. If you have health and strength, it might be worse. While the Blade is not a matrimonial agent it publishes your expressed wishes.

Bennie Columbus—That preacher's explanation is enough to make any one laugh. It is the same old story. Doubtless the woman tempted him as she seems anxious to deny the apple. We make some reference to it.

WHAT OUR FRIENDS SAY

Thinks Well of The Blade

Holcombe, Wis.—I enclose a clipping that if you have not seen well, I know of interest to you and your readers.

The people are slowly waking up to reason and will, I predict, some day look with as much wonder on the doctrines and dogmas of today as we now do on those of the so-called dark ages.

The Blade is one of the most highly thought of in the nation. I am surprised to learn that for so long an editorial light like yours has been hidden under a bushel. Success to you!—E. H. BURNHAM

he was one year behind, but while in Waco, Mr. J. D. Shaw gave me my copy of the Searchlight, he was mailing out October, and after getting home last night I noticed an item stating you had raised the price of the Blade to \$1.50 so I send on the \$2.00 to pay up to the present and as much longer as it will pay for. Mr. Kendrick informed me, you had named Hendrick instead of Kendrick and asked me to have it corrected, please do so, hoping the above is satisfactory. I am yours for progress.—D. F. MARSH.

SELECTED AND ORIGINAL POEMS

LIBERTY

What man is there so bold that he should say:

"Thus far only would I have the sea?"

For whether lying calm and beautiful, Clasping the earth in love, and throwing back

The smile of heaven from waves of amethyst;

Or whether, frenched by the busy winds,

It bears the trade and navies of the world

To ends of sea and storm activity;

Or whether, lashed by tempests, it gives way

To elemental fury, howls and roars at all its rocky barriers, in wild lust Of rain drink the blood of living things, And with its roar it wrecks our legions of desolate shores.

Always it is the sea, and all bowed down Before its vast and varied majesty.

And so in vain will timorous men assay

To set the metes and bounds of liberty, For freedom is its own eternal law;

It makes its own conditions, and in

storm

Or calm alike fulfills the unerring will.

Let us not then despise it when it lies Still as a sleeping lion, while a swarm Of serpent-like evils hover around its head,

Nor doubt it when in mad, disjointed times,

It shakes the torch of terror, and its cry

Shrills o'er the quaking earth, and in the flame

Of riot and war we see its awful form

Rise by the seafold, where the crimson axe

Sings down its grooves the knell of shuddering kings,

For always in thine eyes, O Liberty,

Shines that light whereby the world is saved,

And, though, though say us, we will trust in thee—John Hay.

NOTE REDUCTIONS.

Hanover, N. H.—18 mos., \$1.50; "Regal," 22 mos., \$1.50; "New-Rayway," 22 mos., \$1.50; "Elgin," 24 mos., \$1.50; "Dinner Watch Co., 21 mos., \$1.50; same 17 mos., \$1.40.

Elgin: "Veritas," 23 mos., \$2.00; "Time," 23 mos., \$2.00; "W. W. Raymond," 19 mos., \$2.00; "W. W. Raymond," 17 mos., \$1.80; same, "W. W. Raymond," 22 mos., \$2.00; "Waltham," 24 mos., \$2.00; "Grand Street," 22 mos., \$2.00; "Appleton," Tracey, 20 mos., \$2.00; "Premier," 17 mos., \$1.80; same, not "Premier," \$1.60.

The above guaranteed to pay R. Sundries: "Waltham," P. S. Bartlett, or "Elgin," Wheeler, \$1.50; nickel, \$1.50; silver, gilt, \$1.50; same, solid gold, not advertised, \$1.75. Elgin, Waltham or Hampden, nickel, 15 mos., \$1.50; Elgin or Waltham, solid, 15 mos., \$1.50; Elgin, 15 mos., \$1.50; Hampden 22 mos., \$1.50; gilt, \$1.50; "Standard" or "Century," 7 mos., \$1.50.

All the above in 2, 3 or 4-tonne all metal, plain, polished, engraved, or engraved, filled, screw case, accompanied by manufacturer's and my guaranteed for 20 years, \$3. or in hunting case, \$5. more. In your case, \$1.50 or in plain or in silver case, \$3.50 more than in silver case, in solid gold case, \$10 to \$50 more.

LADIES' GOLD WATCHES.

Large (6) size Elgin, Waltham or Hampden, 20-year gold filled, latest style, artisitic hand-chased, 7 mos., \$9. 12 mos., \$11.50; 15 mos., \$12.50; 18 mos., \$13.50; 21 mos., \$15; 24 mos., \$15.50; 25 mos., \$16.50; 26 mos., \$17.50; 27 mos., \$18.50.

In 25-year cases, \$1 more. In 4-k solid gold, 15 mos., \$15; 18 mos., \$18.50; 21 mos., \$20.50 more. Letter with diamonds, gilt in plain box, \$100 more.

Send for prices of Watches not listed. Jewelry, Books, Pictures, Household Ware, Optical Goods and My Tract, "The Sun in the Crucible," free.

OTTO WETTMAN,

La Grange, Cook Co., Ill.

GREATEST DISCOVERIES OF SCIENCE EVER MADE

GOD, SATAN AND HOLY GHOST ARE NOTHING BUT CREATIONS OF FICTION; HEAVEN AND HELL ARE ONLY MYTHS. CONSCIOUS LIFE IS EXTINGUISHED AT DEATH.

The Church of Humanity teaches these great discoveries through its organ, "The Truth About God." It is published monthly, and its school, "The Truth About God," is a branch school, which teaches Arithmetic, Penmanship and Spelling, and "The Truth About God" in a general course of study given by the temporary International Instructor for the church.

The Church has 100 LIFE MEMBERS. It sends 900 more to formally organize and increase the number of members will be the founders and organizers of the CHURCH OF HUMANITY.

If you have loved ones who wish rescued from the idolatry of worshipping a dead man named Jesus and a myth named God, you should join this Church and it will aid you in freeing them, and in saving your posterity from becoming idolaters by teaching them The Truth About God.

Write to W. H. KERR, 2210 Broadway, Great Bend, Kan., for blank application for membership information about the college, and send \$5.00 for a year's subscription to the "TRUTH ABOUT GOD." Do it now.

RICH

(Continued from page One)

years of suffering, he was ever the same fearless, resigned and cheerful spirit.

"An old age serene and bright
And lovely as a Lapland night
Has led him to the grave."

Marcus J. CUNNING

The death of that well known Catholic Freethinker produced general sorrow in the ministry. He was taken in the prime of life, and at a time when need ed most.

It was my good fortune to know him intimately for a long number of years. He was one of my closest friends, and none knew his true worth better than myself.

Years ago, when the Blade which had removed to this city appeared, Mr. Moore turned the paper over into the hands of myself and Mr. CUNNING, promising that he would not start the Blade again.

Mr. CUNNING shouldered the financial responsibility and at a time at the business, did the selling. We carried free ads in the Blade ourselves.

As the paper had passed into new hands and was no longer in Kentucky, we concluded a new name was in order and called it "The Free Opinion."

After publishing it for three months, by which time, it had begun to show some signs of life, Mr. Moore started the Blade again, and strange to say, opened up his guns on "The Free Opinion," which had so nobly come to his rescue.

I replied by welcoming the Blade back into the fold and by praising Mr. Moore.

As both of us could not prosper by carrying the same list of subscribers we concluded to forgive Mr. Moore and withdraw. He had become so accustomed to having a medium for the expression of his ideas, that a paper was necessary for his very existence, and so we stopped and never said anything about it. But for this change of affairs, the Free Opinion would have continued. We got twenty-seven new subscribers, the day we quit.

After this, Mr. CUNNING always supported the Blade and freely contributed in times of need. He was not a man to carry ill will nor permit it to stand between him and the cause. He took a prominent part in the defense of Mr. Moore during his trial and imprisonment, serving as treasurer of the Committee.

Mr. CUNNING was a successful businessman, and at his death had acquired a handsome competency. He was a gentleman through and through, and regarded by all in the highest esteem. There was a point to every thing he said. His judgment seemed to be supreme in everything. His language was always clear and clean.

Often have I submitted an article to him, and invariably, he would point out the strongest points which had escaped me. Many of the shrewd sayings of Mr. CUNNING have I put into my lines.

His funeral was an event of local importance in Cincinnati. There was a large attendance, and by a very popular class of people, the majority of course being Christians. The services were conducted by myself and Rev. H. H. S. Bigelow, the Congregational minister, whose church is open to every opinion, even Agnosticism, Freethought, and Socialism down to the Salvation army.

Mr. Bigelow read the speech of Socates to his judges after the sentence of death had been pronounced and also paid a fine personal tribute, saying among other things, "We can only judge of how happy and just the whole world would be, by imagining every man to be as Mr. CUNNING."

In addition to a personal tribute, I delivered the address I gave at the grave of Mrs. Williamson.

The feelings and sentiments were now to nearly all present, and many were the expressions of surprise and approval which followed. Nearly every one said it was the finest funeral he had ever attended, and the undertaker, accustomed only to Christian funerals said he had never attended one so natural, and impressive, and in which not a person stirred from his place to the end. Besides he was charmed with the addresses which were pleasing contrast with those he was accustomed to hearing. This was the verdict of all, and the impression left did much to advance the cause of Liberalism. In this city I do not believe the lesson of influencing all liberals to see to it, that such shall be the ceremony over themselves. There is no opportunity afforded us like this to spread our influence and belief, and in which we can come in personal contact with Christians and get their hearing. If you cannot get a liberal to confess, prepare your own addresses. You can clip from the addresses you read in the papers, and add to it whatever personal mention you may want to make. There can be no excuse made by the liberal who does not

thus provide against his burial by a clergyman.

Mr. CUNNING will be greatly missed by the Liberals of Cincinnati, and none will miss him more than I.

THE HISTORY OF RELIGION

Many Jesuses and Many Fathers Both Good and Bad. Looking For Just Leaders of the People.

(By SUSAN J. PECK)

As there were many Jesuses and many Christs, many Sons of God and many Sons of Men, so too, there were many Fathers, the kind of men they called gods; and as the word god originated in the word guide or supervisor, the fact that a king was called a god did not insure to the people a just reign; and as the people (instituted by leaders) strove to decide which of their Christs were true and which were false, they also contended regarding the truth or greatness of their gods or kings. Those who were just were remembered as good gods, while those who were unjust were understood to be bad or false gods. In the arts, those who excelled, the geniuses, were called the Fathers, the gods (or guides). Today we call them masters; and their methods were copied and studied, and copied again after their deaths.

Those whose purpose was to lead the way, often changed the meaning of the names or titles of the guides who had passed from life, making a name or title that in one age is signified goodness or justice, appear to mean the exact opposite in another, as, for example the name Lucifer; which at one time meant only "Light-Bearer," but was afterwards changed to mean darkness or Satan; so that now, we have the two opposite meanings. Those changes were made that there might be greater excuse for strife, and accounts for the many attributes accredited to some gods or guides, whose titles should indicate a less changeable character, though many there were whose minds were swayed by those leaders under those leaders the nations, sects and denominations, each claiming its guide the only true one, persecuted and destroyed those who differed with them.

In separating the acts and teachings of the different persons to whom was given the title Jesus, I will begin with one who was called also the "Son of Man," and whom the people had chosen from their ranks to be their adviser, teacher and representative, because they found him to be just. But first, I will again repeat that the words of the lives of all the others mingled with the lives of all the others mingled in order to give any one of them I must quote from all four of the gospels the remaining books of the New Testament, the Psalms and occasionally the Old Testament, often using only a part of a passage and for the present omitting those passages which compose the allegory. The first important account of the one of whom I now write, (for his genealogy is not given), I find in Matt. v. 23. "And Jesus went about in Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom (of self-control and freedom of Conscience), and healing all manner of sickness (though not all cases among the people)." For he, like many in our time as he was a healer, Matt. xviii. 1.

"At the same time came the disciple unto Jesus saying, 'Who is great in the kingdom of heaven?' And Jesus called a little child unto him, and said, 'Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' (Except ye be as innocent of one to another as little children ye cannot understand heaven) 'Whosoever shall humble himself like this little child (humble himself before Nature's moral law), the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.'

FORGOTTEN

(Continued from page One)

willing to pledge my word for his safety, if for he does assume, and my authority be of any avail, I shall never suffer him to depart alive."

Suspicion came; he was immediately arrested by order of Calvin, charged with rejecting the divinity of the Trinity, and with declaring "that all creatures are of the substance of God, and that God is in all things." Such heresy was too dangerous to be tolerated, and the impression left did much to advance the cause of Liberalism. In this city I do not believe the lesson of influencing all liberals to see to it, that such shall be the ceremony over themselves.

There is no opportunity afforded us like this to spread our influence and belief, and in which we can come in personal contact with Christians and get their hearing. If you cannot get a liberal to confess, prepare your own addresses. You can clip from the addresses you read in the papers, and add to it whatever personal mention you may want to make. There can be no excuse made by the liberal who does not

tated a letter an hour before he breathed his last.

Follower of Luther.

Calvin was a Frenchman, you know, born in the town of Noyon, educated at the universities of Orleans and Paris, and became a wandering follower of Martin Luther, the Dr. Ware, leader of the Swiss reformation, induced him to settle in Geneva in 1536, where he soon became pastor of the largest church, and acquired an influence that extended throughout all Europe and is felt even to the present day. He not only reorganized the church, but the state also, and became the civil as well as the spiritual dictator of Geneva. Calvin is credited with having made a greater impression upon the Christian religion than any other man except St. Paul. Few reformers have ever been so bitterly criticised and condemned. He was undoubtedly a religious man, but must be judged by the standards of his own time, and by the judgments of purely intellectual standpoint, no greater man ever lived, and his mind was of wonderful versatility. In addition to conducting the reformation and organizing the Protestant church all over the continent he managed the civil government of the State of Geneva, enacted and enforced sumptuary laws that have never been exceeded in austerity; founded the University of Geneva and the system of free schools in that canton, and directed their work. He made Geneva the strong fortress of protestantism and safe refuge for persecuted Protestants of all nationalities; he looked after the welfare of the poor who were without a home; he built marshes and warehouses and took a hand in commerce; he wrote ninety-six books and innumerable pamphlets; he preached every Sunday, sometimes twice; he took part in every great theological controversy of his time, and carried on a voluminous correspondence with Protestant leaders everywhere, which is a tremendous record for twenty-eight years for a chronic invalid, often so feeble that he had to be carried about in a chair.

(To be continued).

MORE ABOUT THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

Further Discussion Upon the New Testiment Genealogies. Answer to a Previous Critic.

(By GEORGE VARIO).

Allow me, please, to state to E. Lewis, that I had no intention of writing that he claimed a difference of 495 years between the birth of the two characters called Jesus for the purpose of maintaining the facts in the master, for I did attention to the fact that he had admitted that a difference of 495 years (I called about 3500 years) intervened between the two births, which prove that there were two births.

If he has not the right to what I have written, then I hope he will excuse me for doing exactly what we would like to do.

What is our answer?

I tell them they should be religious, and they answer, "The more religious a person is the more they want to kill somebody, as shown by the history of all Christian countries; that until quite recently the number of persons a man wanted to kill was the thermometer that indicated the height of his religious zeal and fervor; and a few months ago not a Christian could be found in America who did not want to kill thousands of Spaniards killed—Christian Spaniards—and for what? For doing exactly what we would like to do.

What is our answer?

I tell them the "Christian" religion is all right, and they say "All religions are founded upon beliefs; that belief is the absence of knowledge, therefore ignorance, hence all religions are founded upon ignorance and cannot be demonstrated, for the moment it is demonstrated it becomes a science and is no longer a religion; and that all sciences are founded upon knowledge—the absence of ignorance."

What can we do to save ourselves?

I tell them they should not hurt our feelings and they say, "For over fifteen hundred years every papist has been a breast work where the fortified priest and preachers would fire invective, hatred, lies and slander at them and allow them no possible chance for defense, as though none but church people had feelings, or rights?"

How shall we answer?

I tell them the Bible is a sufficient guide for anybody and they say "It is admitted by all scholars to be wrong in its geography, its astronomy, its geology; false in its mathematics, its chronology in its history; in its claims to authorship of many of its books, false in its claim to be the word of God in English in its language; that most of its great men were worse than our average prison convicts and most of its noted women are such as our police are paid for watching; that God himself broke every commandment but one, etc.

What shall we do to be saved?

I appeal to them to help kill the Devil, but they say "Infidels, Socialists, Atheists, Theosophists and Spiritualists as a rule are opposed to killing anybody in peace or war; and further, to kill our real imaginary devil would involve every person in Christian out of a job—but him a sorry devil it would be—and besides they say they can prove by the Bible that the Devil of the Bible has a better character than the God of the Bible and are willing to debate the question with anyone at any time."

Can you not meet them?

I say to them that nothing but the redeeming grace of a crucified Savior can reach them, and they say, "Which of the sixteen crucified Saviors do you mean?" I reply, Christ, God, of course, and they say, "If Christ was a God how could he die? if a man how could he redeem?"

I sometimes think they would not be good members of the church if they could get them in; they might do the church more damage than good.

I am very sanguine of the welfare and happiness of my only son; so much so that I make this liberal offer of one

the churches regarding an "only begotten son" are false, and would have us to doubt that the evidence of our own eyes in reading the Bible, simply because they do not believe it. Perhaps some of them will soon tell us that there was a Bible. Whether Matthew, Luke or John wrote it, we do not know.

Something should be done for him, and done quickly. What is your duty in the matter?

It may be well to let the Infidels go and strive to save ourselves. I don't think, they would make profitable church members anyway; they would prefer to do their own thinking than to pay for it by the year, and they would be talking in church and ask such questions as they ask me viz. What did God do before David instead of punishing the guilty parties? Is it not a fact that according to the Bible God was in the habit of punishing the wrong ones? Did not God approve of King David's polygamy and his slaves? How about Ammon and Tamar and Lot and his daughter? You say you believe there is a hereafter; Spiritualists know there is; why not go to them and have it demonstrated to you, or do you value belief above knowledge? What do you think of David's method of curing the child and fevers? Can one Christian be found good enough to grant to every other person the same equal rights and privileges he assures for himself?

Has not the church always been a heretic, erring person? and is not my way to every action even social reform, every political reform, every religious reform, to liberty of thought; to freedom of speech, and stand hand in hand with capitalists, trusts, corporations, kings, princes, potentates, despots and tyrants; and opposed everything that tends to better the condition of the human race? And was not Christ a Socialist and Spiritualist and much more that I can't think of now?

Of course we know these to be facts every educated person knows them to be facts, but is it not better for the church to keep the people ignorant as we are in hope and maintain a firm demand than to make a frank admission?

What can we do to save ourselves?

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I sometimes think they would not be good members of the church if they could get them in; they might do the church more damage than good.

I am very sanguine of the welfare and happiness of my only son; so much so that I make this liberal offer of one

hundred dollars to any one who will convert him to the Christian religion.

He has been reading "Paine's Examination of the Prophecies" which shows the Old Testament which has any reference to the coming of Christ. Something should be done for him, and done quickly. What is your duty in the matter?

It may be well to let the Infidels go and strive to save ourselves. I don't think, they would make profitable church members anyway; they would prefer to do their own thinking than to pay for it by the year, and they would be talking in church and ask such questions as they ask me viz.

What did God do before David instead of punishing the guilty parties? Is it not a fact that according to the Bible God was in the habit of punishing the wrong ones? Did not God approve of King David's polygamy and his slaves?

How about Ammon and Tamar and Lot and his daughter? You say you believe there is a hereafter; Spiritualists know there is; why not go to them and have it demonstrated to you, or do you value belief above knowledge? What do you think of David's method of curing the child and fevers? Can one Christian be found good enough to grant to every other person the same equal rights and privileges he assures for himself?

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Charles C. Moore Book when you get ready to publish his writing.—C. FETTE

By All Means Publish It.

Douglas, Arizona.—James E. Hughes, Charles C. Moore in book form. Put my name down for one of the first copies.

—A. B. WEST.

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Winter Haven—Please enter my name as a subscriber to the contemplated book to be made up of the writings of Charles C. Moore.—T. WELCH.

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